

Child Care

Mission

To improve developmental outcomes for all children and to help families reach and maintain economic independence by encouraging accessibility to quality child care.

Summary of Activities

To further this mission, the Division of Family and Children (DFC) of the **Family and Social Services Administration** focuses on four main areas: child care subsidies, child care quality improvement initiatives, licensing of child care providers, and registration of child care ministries.

Funds are available for child care subsidies through a statewide voucher system. DFC contracts with a community agency in each county to administer the child care subsidy voucher program for eligible low-income families. Parents can choose from any available licensed or legally license exempt child care providers that meet the established minimum standards, including centers, homes, ministries, school-age care sites, in-home or relative care. The provider selected by the parent is reimbursed directly by a state child care claim office. Families with an annual income greater than the federally established poverty level have co-payments based on a sliding fee schedule. In July 2003, there were 16,427 families and 32,508 children authorized for child care and 2,204 children on the waiting list.

The DFC administers Child Care Development Fund dollars to improve the quality and accessibility and to increase the capacity of early childhood programs. Grant funds are awarded for these outcomes to community partnerships that can demonstrate their ability to identify, fund, implement, and sustain the proposed project. In addition, there are several statewide quality initiatives such as the Business Partnership Specialist project to build successful partnerships with the private sector, T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood INDIANA scholarships to increase the early childhood development knowledge and skills of child care providers, and Child Care Resource and Referral Services to connect families with child care in their community.

The DFC licenses child care homes and centers and is responsible for complaint investigation of child care providers. The child care licensing process provides assurance to working parents that their children are in a safe, healthy, and appropriate environment when in out-of-home care. In addition to licensing child care homes and centers, DFC also registers child care ministries. Inspections are conducted of all centers, ministries, and residential facilities to ensure compliance with health and sanitation standards.

External Factors

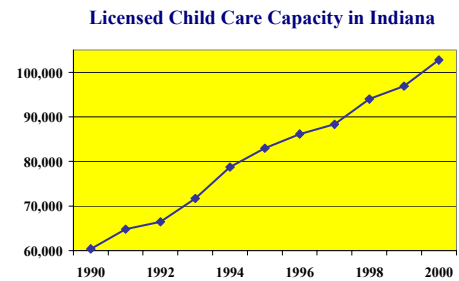
Several trends have had a significant impact on the need for care and early education services among families. One trend has been the long-term increase of women entering the workforce. Another trend has been recent welfare-to-work reforms that limit assistance and encourage economic self-sufficiency. A third trend is the increasing concern for children to arrive at school ready to learn. Together, these societal trends indicate that the need for high quality child care is likely to increase over time. U.S. Census figures for Indiana estimate 340,868 children under the age of five and 337,067 school-age children currently need child care.

Evaluation and Accomplishments

As of May 2003, the T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood Program has provided professional development scholarships for Child Development Associate credentials and degrees in early childhood education for over 3000 providers in 89 different counties. These scholarships provide child care workers with early childhood development knowledge and skills resulting in higher quality child care for over 61,000 children. In addition, provider compensation has been increased and staff turnover has been reduced to 10% in facilities with T.E.A.C.H. participants.



Indiana's public-private partnership initiatives have seen an increase in corporate awareness and support for employee child care needs. The Indiana 'Business Partnership Specialist' initiative supports local community efforts to build successful partnerships with the private sector to enhance the quality and increase availability and accessibility of high-quality care for working families. As of May 2003, estimated total employer investment from the project is \$4,387,500 per year in child care subsidies.



Indiana's On-Line Child Care Learning is the nation's first web based opportunity for providers to earn Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Development and Child Development Associate (CDA). Over 2,000 scholarships have been awarded for college education credit towards Child Development Associate and Early Childhood Development including scholarships for college campus learning. This learning tool meets the needs of many child care providers, especially those in rural areas, who struggle to find the time and means to take advantage of professional development. This cooperative project with Ivy Tech State College and St. Mary-of-the-Woods College was established in August 2001, and already more than 100 students have chosen to use this means for pursuing professional development.

Plans for the Biennium

Over the next biennium, the child care and development system will:

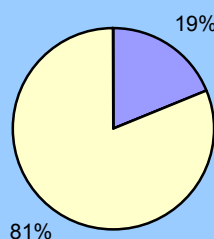
1. Continue to increase accountability and efficiency in the operation of the subsidy program.
2. Maintain financial incentives and technical assistance for licensed providers to seek accreditation; maintain financial incentives and technical assistance to encourage voluntary certification within the child care ministry community.
3. Maintain and enhance the Childcarefinder.IN.gov web site to offer parents access and the opportunity to select the highest quality of care for their children.
4. Continue investing in quality initiatives such as the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program to improve the training, compensation, and educational status of the child care workforce.
5. Expand web-based learning opportunities for child care providers statewide, encouraging providers in rural areas to access quality early childhood training.
6. Partner with the Indiana Association of Child Care Resource and Referral to provide a higher standard of service delivery to families, child care providers and communities by establishing a new service delivery model for a statewide system of child care resource and referral agencies.

Program: 0320

	Actual FY 2001	Actual FY 2002	Estimate FY 2003	Appropriation FY 2004	Appropriation FY 2005
(All Funds)	\$261,718,717	\$243,961,184	\$190,275,286	\$197,142,379	\$197,142,379

Sources of Funds FY 2004 (Approp)

General Dedicated Federal Other



Uses of Funds FY 2004 (Approp)

Personal Services Distributions Capital Other

